

# Support Services for Disabled Children and Young People

## Introduction

Services for disabled children, young people and their families in Northamptonshire are met in a variety of ways via Universal Services, Targeted Services and Specialist Services. This document intends to explain eligibility to access each of these levels.

## What do we mean by disability?

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as:

A person has a disability for the purposes of the Act if he or she has a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Section 6 subsection 1).

This means that, in general:

- the person must have an impairment that is either physical or mental
- the impairment must have adverse effects which are substantial and the long-term substantial adverse effects must have effects on normal day-to-day activities
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Guidance on the Equality Act can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

## Types of support available

### Universal Services

As for all children/young people, disabled children/young people can access Universal Services which include education, health, sports and leisure facilities, all of whom are required, under the Equality Act, to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of disabled children/young people.

### Targeted Services

Targeted Services provide for those children/young people who need some additional support to access opportunities in the community. These may be commissioned services by the Local Authority and/or run by voluntary or charitable organisations, etc.

The Northamptonshire Local Offer holds a database containing information about support and services in Northamptonshire and can be found on

<http://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/send/local-offer/Pages/default.aspx>

### Early Help Assessment

Children/Young people and families who require targeted support should be offered an Early Help Assessment which can be led by any agency. Discussion should take place with the child/young person and family as to who is best placed to lead the assessment. If a

child/young person and family is receiving support from the Early Help Team or SEND Support Services, the Early Help Assessment will identify the targeted support required and the action plan will co-ordinate the individualised provision.

### **Carers Assessments**

Parents and carers could request a Carers Assessment where they are providing regular and substantial support for a disabled child or young person. A Carers Assessment allows you to discuss your individual caring role and will help you identify your eligible needs as well as how these impact on your wellbeing and what you want to achieve in your day to day life. It will help to identify your strengths and capabilities and the support available to you in the community.

The Carer Assessor will help you to develop a plan to support you to carry on looking after the person you care for and to achieve the outcomes you need to maintain your health and wellbeing. The assessor will offer advice, information, and practical support and tell you about other organisations who may be able to offer support.

### **Specialist Services**

If the child/young person's needs and/or family's circumstances cannot be met by Universal and Targeted Services, a Child in Need assessment may be required which will be undertaken by social care and will identify if additional support is required.

Parents may request a Child In Need Assessment, however if the assessment identifies that a child and family's support can be accessed via universal and targeted support the child/young person and family will not be eligible for specialist support at Level 4.

### **What is a Child in Need Assessment?**

This assessment collects information from parents, the child/young person and a range of professionals to determine the level of need. The assessment will identify the level of need based on the complexity of the child/young person's disability and family circumstances. Following this assessment, where a child or young person meets the threshold for specialist services (Level 4 intervention) it is likely that they will have *at least one* of the following needs

- Multiple, highly complex needs with significant impact on the child's day to day life and that of their family which cannot be met through universal or targeted services
- A life-limiting or progressive condition likely to lead to increasing needs over time
- The child is at risk of immediate or significant harm (safeguarding risk)

## **What is the Disabled Children's Team?**

The Disabled Children's Team supports children and families who have been identified as requiring specialist statutory intervention, including child protection.

## **How to access the Disabled Children's Services**

Access to the Disabled Children's Service is via referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) <https://www.MASH@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk>

The referral will ask you for information to help us understand your needs and help you to find suitable support and services at the appropriate level.

## **What does the Disabled Children's Service provide?**

Should the referral to MASH identify eligibility for further assessment from specialist services the referral will be passed to the Disabled Children's Service who will carry out the following:

- Complete a multi-agency assessment with you to identify your family's needs.
- The assessment will identify the type and level of support required to meet the identified need
- provide information about disability services
- Write a support plan which identifies outcomes and details a time limited support package which will be subject to review, allocate or commission support services which are regularly reviewed in line with statutory requirements.

Assessment and support will focus on empowering and enabling young people to develop opportunities that will promote independence. Professionals will work together to meet the child's needs and to share resources and support as appropriate.

## **Parental Involvement in Assessment**

All assessments will be completed with you and your child. The assessment will take into account the additional need and disability of your child. The severity of the condition is not the only factor that will determine the level of support that is offered, but rather how your family can meet your child's needs and the impact those needs have upon you and the wider family.

We will need your consent (unless there are safeguarding issues), to talk to other professionals involved: this could be a health visitor, teacher, doctor, other members of your family or other people that are providing support. All assessments will be person-centred, which means that your child's needs, views and aspirations are at the centre of all assessments.

## What if my child or young person has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan?

For those children and young people with EHC plans who are in receipt of social care support, this will be identified in the EHC Plan which is reviewed annually.

### Levels of need and what support can be offered

<p><b>Level 1</b></p> <p><b>Universal Support and Services</b></p>	<p>All children/young people can access Universal Services and services are expected to make reasonable adjustments to support those with additional needs. Information is available on the Local Offer</p>
<p><b>Level 2</b></p> <p><b>Targeted Support and Services</b></p>	<p>The child or young person will have additional needs and/or a Disability.</p> <p>Children/Young People who require targeted support following an Early Help Assessment can find information on the Local Offer website. The Thresholds and Pathways document can be found at: <a href="http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/thresholdsandpathways">www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/thresholdsandpathways</a>.</p>
<p><b>Level 3</b></p> <p><b>Targeted Support and Services (medium to long term) activity based</b></p>	<p>The child or young person will have additional needs and/or a disability that may have been identified through an Early Help Assessment or a Child in Need Assessment and may require support from Special Educational Needs &amp; Disability (SEND) specialist support services and/or an Early Help Professional. <a href="http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/thresholdsandpathways">www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/thresholdsandpathways</a>.</p>
<p><b>Level 4</b></p> <p><b>Specialist Support and Services including at home</b></p>	<p>The child or young person needs will have been identified by a Child in Need Assessment at a statutory level. At this level families are likely to be allocated a social worker and a range of support services may be offered.</p> <p>The type of support will be discussed and agreed with the family and reviewed on a regular basis - at least a 6 month review.</p>
<p><b>All Levels</b></p>	<p>Following an assessment, children/young people and their families may be offered a range of support services which may include:</p> <p>a) support to meet personal care needs in the home</p>

	<p>b) overnight short breaks  c) co-ordination with health colleagues of specialist equipment or adaptations to the family property with the relevant borough council  e) Provide Carers Assessments</p> <p>Where there are concerns for the child’s safety, Child Protection Procedures may be applied but the social worker will make the parents aware of these concerns.</p> <p>Where the need is for adaptations to a property or specialist equipment, an Occupational Therapy referral will be made. They will undertake an assessment and, where eligible, will arrange for advice, equipment and or adaptations.</p>
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## Summary

Services for disabled children/young people in Northamptonshire aim to help families and their children achieve the very best outcomes. It is important that disabled children/young people’s needs are identified and met at the most appropriate level. Services within Northamptonshire are structured in such a way as to support disabled children/young people to access services at universal and targeted level wherever possible.

Children/Young people can move between these levels of need according to their particular circumstances and the positive impact of advice, help and support. Service responses are flexible to address the changing needs of children, young people and their families.

## Glossary

Assessment	An assessment collects information and determines the level of need that disabled children and young people or their parents and carers have.
Education, Health and Care Plan	An EHC Plan is issued following a statutory assessment where the Local Authority determines that the child’s special educational needs cannot be met by universal and targeted provision. The Plan will include the identification of need and provision required from Health and Social Care services to support the identified special educational need as appropriate.
Support plan	A support plan sets out the support required to meet the assessed need. This will include the support already in place and any additional support identified by the assessment.

Special Needs Index (SNIX)	The Special Needs Index is a voluntary database. It enables the Local Authority and Health to ensure that those registered receive regular information about available services and enables statutory services to identify and commission services required to meet local needs.
Universal Services	These are services that are available to anyone, such as: GPs, dentists, hospitals, schools and include social activities such as youth clubs and leisure centres.
Targeted support	These are services that are commissioned to support disabled children and young people.
Specialist support	These are services that are provided when assessment identifies that a child or young persons needs cannot be met at a universal or targeted level.